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ABSTRACT

A study examined (1) whether there is a significant difference between the inclusion needs of delinquent high school girls, high-achieving nondelinquent high school girls, and nondelinquent high school girls; (2) whether there is a difference between perceived inclusion by peers and teachers in these groups of females; and (3) whether there is a relationship between inclusion by peers or by teachers in early school settings and later delinquency. Subjects completed surveys measuring expressed and wanted aspects of inclusion, control, and affection. Results indicated that there were no significant differences in the inclusion needs of the three groups of females. Delinquent high school girls reported significantly less satisfaction with perceived inclusion by peers and by teachers than the nondelinquent high school girls. There awas no significant difference in the perceived inclusion by peers between the delinquent high school girls and the high achieving high school girls. If delinquent girls experience less satisfaction with perceived inclusion from peers and teacher, then something could be done in the schools to modify this situation. (SRT)

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SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE OF FEMALES: COMMUNICATION PATTERNS IN PRE-ADOLESCENCE AND ADOLESCENCE WHICH ARE RELATED TO LATER CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR

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Introduction

Inclusion is defined as the desire to feel a part of a given group. The need for inclusion is primary to one's existence and is the most basic human interactional need (Schutz, 1978). Research seems to indicate that the acceptance by peers of the young female, early in her educational career, tends to determine to some extent the social acceptability of her behavior which follows in later years (Glueck & Glueck, 1950). By the time juvenile court and correctional agencies are called to cope with persistent female delinquents, the roots of emotional and behavioral maladjustment are deeply embedded in personality and character ("Teens Alienated," 1985).

At an early age in school, boys and girls are equally concerned with achievement in school and have similar aspirations for success in future jobs. However, when these same students enter the sixth or seventh grade, there is a marked difference in the way they progress in developing self-esteem. For boys, self-esteem seems to be tied to achievement and for girls, self-esteem seems tied to interpersonal relationships (Eder, 1985).

Eder (1985) reports that it is easier for a boy to achieve self-esteem than it is for a girl. She found:

> There are at least two differences between athletics and cheerleading as sources of status. One concerns the extent to which selection is based on objective, achievement-related criteria. Achievement is obviously important in athletics, but it is generally less important in cheerleading. Selection of cheerleaders is usually based on a number of criteria, including poise, personality, and appearance . . . . A second difference concerns the number of people involved in each of these activities. A large number of boys are involved in athletic activities, but only six to eight girls per grade are selected as cheerleaders (Eder, p. 155).

The girls who are not popular or do not have popular friends have little chance of achieving much social status or self-esteem. In fact, it has been reported that many

girls suffer a significant decrease in self-esteem during early adolescence. This decrease in lowered self-esteem is usually associated with entrance into junior high school where social status becomes very important (Simmons, Rosenberg & Rosenberg, 1973). Some of these girls have little chance to achieve desired social status or develop positive self-esteem because they are seldom accepted into the popular groups. Subsequently, some of these girls reach outside their peer group to achieve acceptance from others who are not popular and as a result, fail to develop socially desirable traits themselves. Some research findings indicate that female delinquents generally reported having been isolated or rejected in school situations and, as a result, almost all indicated that they preferred to associate with other delinquents (Glueck & Glueck, 1950).

The two researchers completing this study spent a combined six years employed in state correctional institutions dealing primarily with young females.

Related Literature

Literature indicates that society tends to treat boys and girls differently, especially in the way they develop their self-esteem. For instance, Kagan (1985) suggests a boy's self-esteem appears related to accomplishment, while a girl's self-esteem seems associated with her social interactions. Evidence strongly suggests that positive or negative social experiences in the school setting have a great influence on self-esteem and the way one views his relationship to society.

Homes, communities, economic status and churches may differ, but schooling provides a more consistent common denominator (Auerswald, 1969). Children are required to go to school. The school which makes the child feel accepted and important, provides the atmosphere where students can learn self-acceptance and a feeling of high self-worth (Weaver, 1959).

The relationships among acceptance, achievement and deviancy in the school setting are not clear, but there seems to be interrelatedness. Gold and Mann seem to feel that there is a strong relationship:

> Delinquent behavior is an ego defense, in the psychoanalytic meaning of that theory (1), against external realities which threaten a young person's self-esteem (2), a derogated self-image is naturally aversive and it will set in motion psychic forces to dispel it. Delinquent behavior is such a psychological defense in that it

> provides a way of avoiding situations which endanger self-esteem and of engaging in experiences that promise a form of self-enhancement. A situation endangering self-esteem can be regarded as a provocation to delinquency: it is an experience that motivates an individual to be disruptive or delinquent.
>
> One important setting in a young person's life which is rife with provocations to delinquent behavior is the school. Incompetance or failure in school can be seen as a major provocation to delinquent behavior. . . . Experiences of success and failure pervade scholastic life (3). If an adolescent falls short of his aspirations for scholastic achievement, and if he experiences few if any other successes in school life (such as popularity with peers or athletic achievement), he will have to cope in some way with lowered self-image.
>
> Disruptive or delinquent behavior in school is especially appropriate as a way of coping wih low self-esteem for several reasons. First, the behavior occurs at the time and in the place where the pain of failure is felt. Second, the appreciative audience that enhances its effectiveness as a coping mechanism is more readily found at school than elsewhere. Typically there is an undercurrent of adolescent negativity toward school, even among students who would not behave badly themselves, which provides a wide audience for such behavior. And, third, disruptive behavior in school functions as a public performance or a mode of self-presentation, it is also a declaration or revolt against the criteria by which the youth has come to regard himself as a failure. It defies the exercise of authority over both deportment and standards for scholastic achievement; it devalues the devaluations and the devaluators (4) (Gold & Mann, 1976).

Acceptance at the school seems to be a very important first step for the child because it provides an environment where self-esteem can be safely developed. There is abundant evidence that a man cannot thrive, and indeed may not be able to survive, without at least one affiliation of sufficient intimacy. Auerswald illustrated the point when he wrote:

> To develop and maintain the sense of belonging that is so desperately needed in each growing child and adult, the most important environmental ingredient is an atmosphere of acceptance. Messages conveyed by the actions and words of those around the individual must mean, first, "We want you with us" or at least, "We do not want to get rid of you" and, second, "We will respond to you when you send us a message" (Auerswald, 1969, p. 184).

A student who does not find acceptance in the classroom or in the home environment appears to look for acceptance outside the classroom. The need to search for acceptance outside the classroom or home sometimes creates some serious problems. The problems arise because the student meets and associates with other students who are also seeking acceptance outside the classroom. The students are seeking attention, yet they see little means of getting socially acceptable attention. As a result, sometimes they resort to socially unacceptable activities in order to gain attention. These activities often are delinquent acts, and this quickly capture the attention of the school authorities or police (Glueck & Glucek, 1950).

Many of these same students join together and form gangs. While simply being in a group does not create a problem for a student, a problem can arise from the high exposure to other persons who commit questionable acts. It has been found that belonging to a delinquent group does not necessarily mean that a person will commit a delinquent act, but most delinquent acts are committed by persons who are members of a delinquent gang (Glueck & Glueck, 1950). The literature suggests that something needs to be done to prevent students from having to join gangs in order to find acceptance.

Previous research (Diemont, 1985, pp. 3-6) seems to show that inclusion in early life may tend to determine, to some extent, whether or not an individual will likely later turn to deviant activity. This study was designed to determine if there are relationships between feelings of inclusion of females in early school years and later deviant behavior.

Statement of Research Questions and Hypotheses

After reviewing the literature, the following major questions were advanced:

1. Is there a significant difference between the wanted inclusion needs, as measured by the FIRO-F, of delinquent girls, high-achieving non-delinquent high school girls and non-delinquent high school girls?

2. Is there a significant relationship between feelings of inclusion by peers in early school settings and later deinquent activity and achievement of young females?

3. Is there a significant relationship between feelings of inclusion by teachers in early school settings and later delinquent activity and achievement of young females?

4. Is there a significant difference between perceived inclusion by peers and perceived inclusion by teachers as reported by delinquent high school girls, high-achieving non-delinquent high school girls and non-delinquent high school girls?

In an attempt to answer the questions proposed and based on the review of literature, the following hypotheses were advanced:

H1 There will be a significant difference in inclusion needs among non-delinquent high school girls, high achieving non-delinquent high school girls and delinquent high school girls as measured with the FIRO-F.

H2 There will be a significant difference in reported satisfaction with perceived inclusion by peers as measured on the Perceived Inclusion Measure among delinquent high school girls, high achieving non-delinquent high school girls and non-delinquent high school girls.

H3 There will be a significant difference in reported satisfaction with perceived inclusion by teachers as measured on the Perceived Inclusion Measure among delinquent high school girls, high achieving non-delinquent high school girls and non-delinquent high school girls.

H4 There will be a significant difference between perceived inclusion by peers vs. perceived inclusion by teachers as reported by delinquent high school girls, by high-achieving non-delinquent high school girls and by non-delinquent high school girls.

Methodology

Subjects

The subjects for this study consisted of three groups of girls, aged 17-19: (1) Twelfth grade girls from a mid-western high school population, who because of delinquent behavior, reside in a home for delinquent girls. These are identified in the study as delinquent high school girls. (2) Twelfth grade girls from a major midwestern high school attending classes for high achieving high school students. These are identified as high-achieving non-delinquent high school girls, and (3) Twelfth grade girls from a major midwestern high school identified by their principal as having no history of delinquency. These are identified in the study as non-delinquent high school girls.

Measures

The following measures were administered to all female subjects: The FIRO-F, a measure of wanted inclusion, and the Perceived Inclusion Measure, a modified version of the LIPHE, which was administered twice; once to measure perceived inclusion from peers and once to measure perceived inclusion from teachers.

The FIRO-F (Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientations - Feelings) consists of six Guttman scales of nine items each. They represent the expressed and wanted aspects of inclusion, control and affection. This study selected for analysis the scores on the wanted dimension of inclusion. At the feeling level, the FIRO-F inclusion measure includes dimensions of significance, competence, and loveability. This study singled out the measure on the interpersonal dimension of inclusion which is defined as follows:

> The interpersonal need for inclusion is the need to establish and maintain a satisfactory relationship with people with respect to interaction and association. Some terms that connote various aspects of a relationship that is primarily positive inclusion are "associate, interact, mingle, communicate, belong, companion, comrade, attend to, member, togetherness, join, extravert, pay attention to interested, encounter." Negative inclusion is connoted by "exclude, isolate, outsider, outcast, lonely, detached, withdrawn, abandon, ignore." (Schutz, 1978, p. 8).

Internal reliability estimate of this measure was .94 (Schutz, p. 8).

The LIPHE (Life InterPersonal History Enquiry, pronounced LIFE) scales, from which the Perceived Inclusion Measure was adapted, are designed to measure the relations between parents and children from the point of view of the child after the child has become an adult. It yields separate scores for mother and for father, and each relation is measured in the areas of inclusion, control, and affection (Schutz, 1978, p. 15). This study was concerned with reported perceptions in the area of inclusion in the school environment. The Perceived Inclusion Measures, (Peers) and (Teachers), were modified from the LIPHE and were designed to measure satisfaction with previous inclusion in interaction with peers and in interaction with teachers, with separate scores for peers and teachers paralleling the separate scores for mothers and fathers in the LIPHE measure. The measure reports the satisfaction respondents have felt with the attention and the feeling of importance received from peers and teachers in the past. The first set of nine items measures satisfaction with perceived inclusion from peers and is identified as Perceived Inclusion Measures (Peers). The second set of nine items measures satisfaction with perceived inclusion from teachers and is identified as Perceived Inclusion Measures (Teachers).

The instrument was pre-tested with 117 subjects, 52 (44%) male and 65 (56%) female, with a mean age of 17.7. Cronbach's Alpha was employed as a test of reliability for each of the two sets of scales included in the Perceived Inclusion Measure. A reliability coefficient of .94 was obtained on the first set of 9 items and a reliability coefficient of .93 was obtained on the second set of 9 items.

Procedures

Subjects completed the FIRO-F, the Perceived Inclusion Measure (Peers), and the Perceived Inclusion Measure (Teachers) during regularly scheduled class times. The FIRO-F and the Perceived Inclusion Measures were presented in random order. A one-factor analysis of variance with three levels of girls was completed with the scores from the Perceived Inclusion Measure (Peers) as the dependent variable. A one-factor analysis of variance with three levels of girls was completed wih the scores from the Perceived Inclusion Measure (Teachers) as the dependent variable.

The FIRO-F, Perceived Inclusion Measure (Peers), and the Perceived Inclusion Measure (Teachers) were administered to a required personal living class which included all 12 residents of the home for delinquent girls; to a required English class for high-achieving students which included 17 high-achieving non-delinquent high school

girls; and to a required English class which included 18 non-delinquent high school girls.

Scores were selected for study as follows: All scores of the FIRO-F, the Perceived Inclusion Measure (Peers), and the Perceived Inclusion Measure (Teachers) were used from the 12 delinquent high school girls, the total number of these students available; 12 sets of scores were randomly selected from the total of 17 sets from 17 high achieving non-delinquent high school girls; and 12 sets of scores were randomly selected from the total of 18 sets from the 18 non-delinquent high school girls.

Statistical Analyses

Hypothesis 1 was tested by employing a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), with three levels of high school girls as the independent variable. The dependent variable was the measure of wanted inclusion from the FIRO-F

Hypothesis 2 was tested using a one-way analysis of variance with three levels of high school girls as the independent variable. The dependent variable was the measure of satisfaction with inclusion from peers as reported on the Perceived Inclusion Measure (Peers).

Hypothesis 3 was tested using a one-way analysis of variance with three levels of high school girls as the independent variable. The dependent variable was the measure of satisfaction wih inclusion from teachers as reported on the Perceived Inclusion Measure (Teachers).

Hypothesis 4 was tested by employing a repeated measures design for each of the three groups of high school girls to determine the significance of difference between the reported satisfaction with perceived inclusion from peers vs. perceived inclusion from teachers as measured by the Perceived Inclusion Measure.

To test the hypotheses the Alpha level was set at .05. When significance was indicated, the Tukey test was employed for comparisons between the means.

Results

Hypothesis testing produced the following results:

H1 which predicted significant differences among groups when measuring wanted inclusion was not supported. Although the delinquent high school girls

reported more wanted inclusion than the high achieving non-delinquent high school girls and non-delinquent high school girls, the results, although nearly at the sign- high achieving non-delinquent high school girls reported the lowest wanted inclusion.

H2 which predicted a significant difference among groups in reported satisfaction with perceived inclusion by peers, as measured by the Perceived Inclusion Measure was supported: [F(2,33)=5.64, P=.008]. The delinquent high school girls reported significantly less satisfaction with perceived inclusion by peers than the non-delinquent high school girls. The delinquent high school girls reported less satisfaction with perceived inclusion by peers than the high achieving non-delinquent high school girls, and the high achieving non-delinquent high school girls reported less satisfaction than the non-delinquent high school girls, and in both instances the difference approached significance, but was not significant.

H3 which predicted a significant difference among groups in reported satisfaction with perceived inclusion by teachers, as measured by the Perceived Inclusion Measure was supported: [F(2/33)=5.04, P=.012]. The delinquent high school girls reported significantly less satisfaction with perceived inclusion from teachers than the high achieving non-delinquent high school girls and the non-delinquent high school girls. Although not significant, the high achieving non-delinquent high school girls reported more satisfaciton with perceived inclusion from teachers than the non-delinquent high school girls.

Finally, H4 which predicted a significant difference between reported satisfaction with perceived inclusion by peers vs. reported satisfaction with perceived inclusion by teachers as reported by delinquent high school girls [F(1,11)=32.79, P=.008], by high achieving non-delinquent high school girls [F91,11)=32.79, P=<.001], and non-delinquent high school girls [F(1,11)=9.14, P=.011] was supported. The delinquent high school girls, the high-achieving non-delinquent high school girls, and the non-delinquent high school girls each reported significantly less satisfaction with perceived inclusion from peers than with perceived inclusion from teachers.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the inclusion needs of delinquent girls with a history of criminal acts to see if their inclusion needs differed from those of high achieving high school girls and high school girls generally. It was thought that the delinquent and the high achieving high school girls would report significantly higher needs to be included and that having found their needs for inclusion not satisfied from interacting with their peers and teachers, they sought inclusion and acceptance elsewhere, with the delinquent girls having joined with deviant groups and the high-achieving high school girls finding recognition by achieving in the classsroom. The study did not support this prediction. There was no significant difference in the wanted inclusion needs of the three groups of girls as with the FIRO-F.

The delinquent high school girls reported significantly less satisfaction with perceived inclusion by peers and by teachers than the non-delinquent high school girls. This supports the prediction that delinquent girls feel rejected in the classroom. It is interesting to note that the delinquent high school girls are significantly less satisfied with the inclusion from teachers than are the high-achieving high school girls. Perhaps because the high-achieving girls are likely to be dedicated to their studies, they feel more included by the teachers.

There was not a significant difference in the perceived inclusion by peers between the delinquent high school girls and the high achieving high school girls. Perhaps the delinquent girls join with other delinquents to find acceptance, and, perhaps, the high achieving girls move their efforts toward inclusion and recognition from the social arena to the classroom. By excelling in the classroom students may receive some of the acceptance and inclusion they desire.

The literature suggests that peer inclusion is very important to the high school girl. Each group of girls reported significantly less satisfaction with perceived inclusion from peers than with perceived inclusion from teachers. There could be a number of reasons for this. Perhaps teachers, for a number of reasons, are more effective communicators with high school girls. Perhaps the inclusion from peers is more important to high school girls, and dissatisfaction is more probable with peers than with teachers, as peers are more important to the high school girl.

It is interesting to conjecture why the delinquent

girls are not satisfied with their inclusion by peers and teachers. Perhaps there is something innate in these girls which causes them to exhibit behavior which causes others to reject them. These same innate characteristics, if present, could cause the delinquent girls to turn to deviant and criminal activity.

Considerably more study is needed to answer these questions. At this point, it can be said that this study showed a significant difference between the perception of inclusion among the three groups of girls. It is interesting to note that the delinquent high school girls reported significantly less satisfaction with perceived inclusion by peers and teachers than did the high school girls generally. Studies need to be completed to determine why the delinquent high school girls are less satisfied with their perceived inclusion. It would be well to study how peers and teachers view the delinquent student. Perhaps this would provide some insights.

This study, like any other research, has limitations. One limitation was the small sample size (12) available of delinquent girls who had committed criminal acts. It is difficult to identify significant numbers of these subjects for this type of study. However, in future research a larger sample might be available.

Conclusion

If it is true that delinquent girls experience less satisfaction with perceived inclusion from peers and teachers, perhaps something can be done in the schools to modify this situation--to cause them to feel more included and less rejected. Schools must be thought of as proper arenas for behavioral change (Sabatino & Mauer, 1978, p. 56). Teachers must establish a causal approach to behavior (Ojemann, 1976, p. 203). Any attempt for changes however, must be very carefully done. Sociometric testing could be employed to identify the isolated and rejected students in their early school years. Steps could be taken to assure more inclusion for them. There is a danger in identifying these students, however, in earlier school years, and employing strategies for their increased inclusion to prevent their turning to deviant groups and possibly to criminal acts. Identification could lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy. It is believed that there are significant questions to pose and to attempt to answer in the area of inclusion and deviancy.

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